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ABSTRACT

Most preservice teacher training institutions are aware of both the charge placed upon them to develop international understanding and the idea of the human family. The finite nature of the world, whose future rests on appropriate organization and ethical interaction, has made it imperative that teachers help children of the 21st century understand cultural differences and world problems. A case-study detailing how the Educational Department of Wittenberg University (Ohio) addressed this charge is presented. The major goals of this project were to increase preservice teacher awareness of international issues, and to establish international student teaching experiences, with close institutional collaboration and accountability. Six categories for decision making and action were found to be crucial for the achievement of these goals: (1) a foundation and framework for specific action; (2) curriculum content; (3) site selection and visitation; (4) development of resources; (5) faculty participation; and (6) administration and management. (JD)

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DEVELOPING AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

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Most pre-service teacher training institutions are aware of the charge placed upon them to develop international understanding and the idea of the interdependence of the human family. The reality that we live on a finite precarious spaceship, whose future rests on appropriate organization and ethical interactions, has made it imperative that teachers recognize the world village and the necessity to assist the children of the 21st century to understand the "other." This article will present a case study detailing how a pre-service teacher training department in a liberal arts institution addressed this charge.

The Education Department of Wittenberg University committed itself to developing a departmental international perspective. This commitment was to permeate the various courses and activities of the department as a whole. The project is in its third year of development and clear signs of implementation of international dimensions are visible throughout the Education Department. Wittenberg University, through the director of International Education, received a Title VI Federal Grant entitled "Global Perspective in the Undergraduate Curriculum of Wittenberg University." This funding made the project possible.

The major goals of this project were to a) increase awareness of international issues in student-teaching experiences in pre-service teachers, and b) to establish international student-teaching experiences with close institutional collaboration and accountability. Six categories for decision and action were found to be crucial for the achievement of the two international goals: I. Foundations, II. Curriculum Content, III. Practicum, IV. Faculty Participation, V. Resources, and VI. Administrative Commitment. This paper will address these six categories in an attempt to provide information on the accomplishment of the goals.

I. Foundational

The education faculty elected an "International Subcommittee" to give guidance for the accomplishment of the international goals. The committee moved directly into architecting a foundation and framework for specific action. After generating a statement of rationale formulating the department's intents with the larger framework of the University's aims, the committee identified the major concerns expressed by the department when the committee was instituted. The concerns were listed in the form of questions, and generating answers to the questions became the agenda for subsequent committee work.

Five questions were identified as central and they are as follows: 1) How can we induce an awareness of global issues in all of the pre-service teachers we recommend for certification? 2) What are the characteristics of a good international field experience? 3) What international sites can provide these characteristics? 4) How can we decide which students may participate in international field work? and 5) How can we determine if our goals for them are being achieved? As a group, the questions signaled the department's intent to take seriously the responsibility for providing the highest quality experiences for students possible, to take responsibility to the greatest degree possible (short of direct supervision) for the success of students participating in international "field experiences" which later came to mean only "student teaching."

The answer to the first question was unanimous. Only an infusion model, wherein global awareness permeated all courses, was acceptable. In addition, specific courses designed in multicultural and in global

education were endorsed and recommended as electives available to all students. This subject will be treated more extensively in the section dealing with curriculum.

The answers to the remaining questions were addressed with the help of a review of pertinent University involvements, and the advice of experienced consultants from other universities. Our basic concern was to determine the advisability and possibility of a small institution like ours entering directly into arrangements with international schools, and whether strong programs were possible in such an arrangement. Our worth in this area is addressed more extensively in the section of this report dealing with the Practicum.

II. Curriculum

The committee desired to strengthen the role of international perspectives in all dimensions of professional pre-service teacher education. The committee was also committed to a general principle of infusion. Therefore, the committee moved to develop three concurrent curriculum emphases: 1) to establish two courses, International and Comparative Issues in Education and Multicultural Education: Toward a Culturally Pluralistic Perspective; 2) to assist faculty in developing global units in existing courses; and 3) to support student selection of global awareness and understanding courses outside of the education department.

The first direction the department moved was to establish the two elective courses for global understanding. One course, International and Comparative Issues, was developed to allow students to examine various societies through historical, religious, political, economic,

societal, geographic, and educational perspectives. Emphasis was placed on the relationship of societal factors (which influence change in developed and developing countries) to the educational institution.

The other course, Multicultural Education: Toward a Cultural Pluralistic Perspective, focused on the rich cultural mosaic of the United States with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for multicultural teaching competencies. The central goal of the course was to have students living, functioning and teaching effectively in our pluralistic society. Topics included: Cultural Pluralism, Culture, Ethnicity, Race, Sexism, WASP Ethic, U.S. Mosaic. Special attention was given to developing a rationale for multicultural teaching.

These two courses were essential elements in our establishment of an International Perspective but by no means the total curriculum packet. The education faculty developed units in existing courses emphasizing knowledge, skills and attitudes in global awareness. The faculty selected the global concepts which correlated with their course materials and developed units or lessons on the given theme. (Example: In Reading Methods, international story books and adventures were presented; in Math Methods, international measures were addressed, etc.)

The third curriculum component of the program was the requirement that education department students take course work in an area entitled "Other Cultures." These courses promote global awareness and understanding. Students may fulfill this requirement either by taking a course in cultures foreign to their own, or by living experiences outside the students' own cultures. Courses or experiences in minority

cultures in the United States, to the extent that they require a reorientation perspective, may be taken.

III. Practicum

It was the unified objective of the project that a practicum centering on international student teaching be explored. Involvement in international education student teaching had been a long tradition at Wittenberg, but the department was disenchanted by the lack of direct involvement in placement and supervision. In order to ensure a clearer understanding of Wittenberg pre-service international program goals and the international schools goals, a circumspect plan was designed. The design called for site selection research and site visitation.

The subcommittee felt that in establishing and ensuring a quality international student teaching program research site selections must be analyzed carefully. The International Subcommittee reviewed past involvement. History appeared to support the theory that past sites had stretched beyond the point of profitability. Many of the rich ties of the past had lapsed and there were few sites that the department felt were cognizant of our program or that we were knowledgeable about theirs.

In order to help the committee to think more specifically about alternatives open to us, we invited two consultants to campus. The first was the former director of one of the nation's largest international Student Teaching Consortiums; the other, the current director of a highly successful international program housed in a liberal arts college (similar to Wittenberg).

The first consultant explained that there were three alternatives which he believed would be viable options for our department to pursue. These options were: 1) to become an active participant in a meritorious consortium already in operation; 2) to establish a small accountable consortium with other similar schools; or 3) to develop one-to-one relationships with international school sites. The department vetoed both options one and two. Option One appeared to be similar to the model with which we were dissatisfied in the past. Large consortiums welcomed our students and placed them in international school sites. However, the cooperating school was void of real connection with Wittenberg and Wittenberg had limited involvement with them. It seemed like Option Two would require more time, money and personnel than our department could provide. Option Three was compatible with our desired outcome. This option would require immediate funding for establishing one-to-one relationships. The money was available to us through the Title VI Grant. Our second consultant added further professional support to our decision and assisted in providing us with contact points in international settings.

After cautious exploration, five European and two Mexican sites were selected for visitation. Two international committee members were selected and funded to take information about Wittenberg to these sites. The committee members took to the selected sites a folder inclusive of data on Wittenberg's education program, the University, and the project program. The faculty member was also given the task of collecting information on the schools visited. Information gleaned included: description of the school (philosophy of school), statistics on

students, teachers and administrators, school schedule, facilities, setting of school, nature of the student body, accreditation, application, curriculum, description of faculty, educational, cultural and social opportunities for student teachers, housing/transportation/ living costs for students teachers, past and present collaboration with other universities, and provisions for supervision of student teachers.

The selected committee members returned and reported their findings to the department along with suggested criteria for site selection. These criteria included what the school should have: a supportive environment for U.S. students, cooperative personnel, cultural resources available, high academic standards, supervision potential, housing available, etc. The department employed the developed criteria for selection of international sites to make their decision on the information presented. Three European international schools and one Mexican international school were selected. Negotiations are now being finalized by the Director of Student Teaching.

IV. Resources and Facilities

In an effort to make the International goals attainable, proper resources and facilities must be available. The pre-service teacher training faculty was able to achieve its goals through the resources acquired from the Title VI Grant, the International Education Office and other University support. The director of International Education received the Title VI Grant for the University as a whole. One sector of the grant had been propósed for Education Department use. Through careful and deliberate work, the education faculty used the money to

actualize their stated international goals. The University support will sustain the project.

V. Faculty Participation

The education faculty was the major variable that made the project possible. Each member of the faculty gave time and attention to the international goals. The department members were responsible for globalizing their course content. The education department faculty also attended three workshops: 1) Global Awareness, 2) Multicultural Education, and 3) East Asia. Guest speakers were coordinators of the first two workshops and the East Asia Department on Wittenberg's campus was responsible for the third.

The Wittenberg University faculty also was involved as both visiting speakers in education courses as well as instructors in Global Understanding courses.

The four selected International Student Teaching Sites will provide personnel for exchange programs and visitation. Since the cooperating International Schools are informed about Wittenberg's education program, they will be more likely to collaborate on the pre-service development of future teachers at Wittenberg.

VI. Administration and Management

Indispensable to the success of the Education Department's program development in global education to this point has been the support of the University administration and the help of persons already involved in international programs, particularly the Director to the Office of International Education of the University. This statement is offered not merely to give credit and appreciation to those who have helped us,

but rather to state that we have become unequivocably convinced that such resources and support are necessary for the success of an education department in any small college in generating a program such as we had in mind. Specifically, in times of tight budgets and shrinking programs, it takes a great deal of courage for university administrators to commit this support to programs which expand rather than restrict a curriculum. Furthermore, the in-house expertise available from the Director of International Education helped frequently to focus and extend the committee's work. The director sat frequently as an adviser in our working sessions. All memos, minutes and other leadership of the committee work were regularly sent to both the Provost and the director of International Education.

Of further note has been the importance of naming the director of student teaching as an integral committee member. The director was particularly helpful in the committeee's consideration of the logistics of selecting and evaluating students. She also suggested procedures for obtaining direct institutional arrangements with international schools and providing a sense of what form and procedures would be necessary to administer programs effectively once they were under way.

In Conclusion

At this point in the development of a global perspective in the Education Department at Wittenberg, it appears it will indeed be possible for a small liberal arts institution to establish international student teaching experiences with close, direct collaboration between the University and selected international schools. Our optimism has

been particularly fueled by the admiration we have gained for the high quality of education provided in international schools. Indeed, it is our perception that the uniform quality of programs and staff regularly exceed that of the typical public school. We recognize, of course, that most international schools are private schools, and enjoy many advantages in support and student population unavailable in the typical American public schools. Our admiration for them is strong, nevertheless.

We are also optimistic that global issues pertinent to education can be respectably fused into all courses. Part of our optimism proceeds from the desire of all education faculty to accomplish the international goals. Part of our optimism is also due to our understanding of the relationship between global and multicultural education issues, and our proven ability to increase our students' awareness and acceptance in this area. Underwriting both, however, is a sense that overall public awareness regarding the interrelatedness of all the world's citizens is high, due in no small part to the efforts of organizations such as ICET. Our students and those who hire them are not only aware of the dimensions of global issues but more insistent that these issues be addressed in our schools now. Wittenberg's international goals were established in an effort to achieve the charge placed on pre-service teacher training institutions to develop international understanding in future instructors. This paper has summarized our deliberate movement toward actualizing these goals.